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# Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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It's true that you can leave fruits and fruit juices in opened tin cans in your refrigerator -- but some acid fruits and juices may acquire a metallic taste. The taste is not pleasant, but neither is it harmful, according to USDA home economists.

\* \* \*

Four half-cup servings (if you serve the liquid with the fruit) may be prepared from a 16 ounce can of fruit.

\* \* \*

Fixing berries? Don't wash them until you're almost ready to serve them and don't take the stems or caps off of your cherries or strawberries until shortly before they will be eaten. Keeping quality is better if left intact.

\* \* \*

Add a stick of cinnamon and a few cloves at the beginning of cooking dried fruits...a real taste tempter.

\* \* \*

Dried vegetables should be stored in a dry, cool, dark place.

## CONSUMERS ASK —

### ....ABOUT CITRUS AND THE FREEZE

What are the real effects of the Big Freeze on citrus crops? Preliminary estimates by economists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicate that consumers may be expected to pay about 4 cents more for concentrated orange juice in the six ounce can. Actually, the U.S. orange crop (on March 1) forecast was about 1 percent higher than 1975/76 despite the effects of the Florida freeze.

Based on original estimates, before the freeze, it was determined that orange prices would have been \$1.15 a dozen this year.\* Current estimates now run closer to \$1.25 per dozen.

Valencias (in Florida) were not ready for harvest at the time of the freeze and were more severely damaged than more mature fruit. Fruit from some groves will be completely lost.

In California...Orange production, estimated at 5.3 million boxes, is unchanged from March 1, but up to 1.3 percent from last season.

## AGRICULTURAL CHARTS

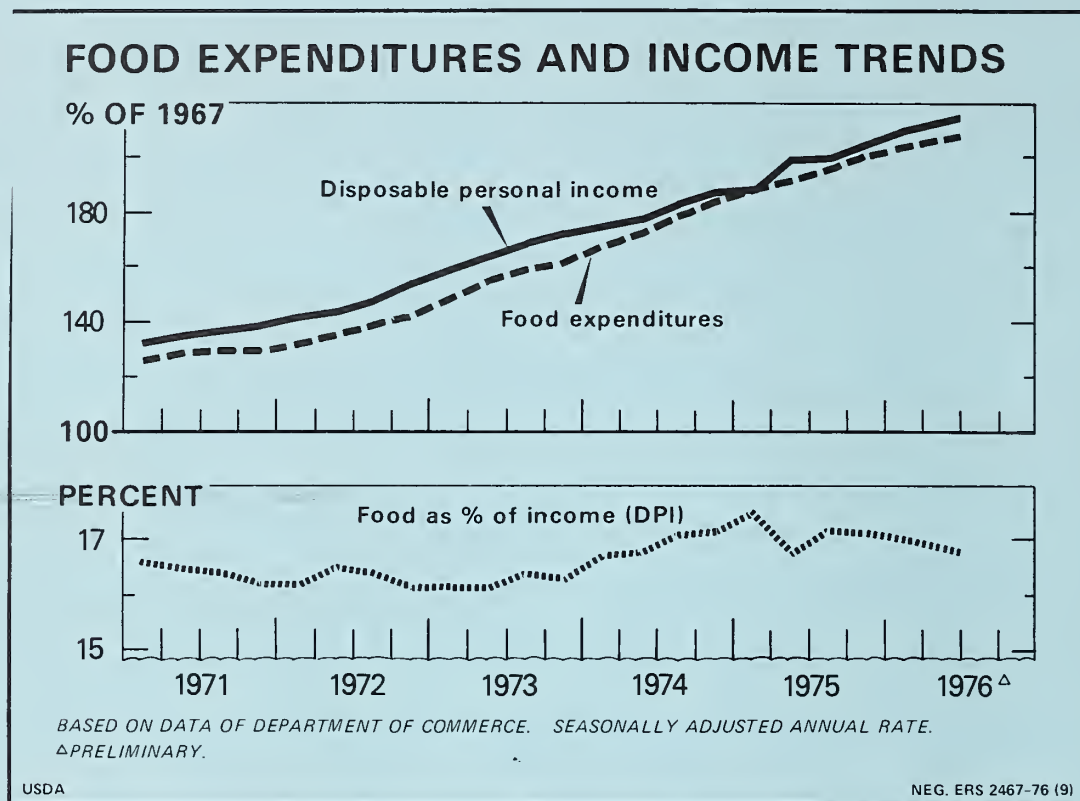


Figure 45

Food expenditures and income trends, 1967-76

| Year                    | Index, 1967=100            |                                | Food expenditures as percentage of income |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
|                         | Disposable personal income | Food expenditures <sup>1</sup> |   |
|                         |                            |                                | Percent                                   |
| 1967 .....              | 100.0                      | 100.0                          | 17.5                                      |
| 1968 .....              | 108.1                      | 108.0                          | 17.5                                      |
| 1969 .....              | 115.8                      | 115.3                          | 17.3                                      |
| 1970 .....              | 121.0                      | 124.8                          | 17.3                                      |
| 1971 .....              | 136.4                      | 128.4                          | 16.4                                      |
| 1972 .....              | 147.2                      | 137.5                          | 16.3                                      |
| 1973 .....              | 165.6                      | 154.5                          | 16.3                                      |
| 1974 .....              | 180.5                      | 175.7                          | 17.0                                      |
| 1975 .....              | 198.5                      | 194.5                          | 16.8                                      |
| 1976 <sup>2</sup> ..... | 210.8                      | 204.2                          | 16.9                                      |

Prepared by the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Slides/prints of these charts are available to the PRESS for reproduction if requested to the Editor of Food and Home Notes.



## CITRUS AND THE FREEZE (CON'T)

Navel oranges down 5 percent from 1975/6 and California's Valencia crop is up 8 percent from last season.

In Texas...orange prospects remained at 6 percent higher than the 1975/6 crop.

### ON GRAPEFRUIT

Grapefruit growers in Florida now expect only slightly below last season's record crop...the loss attributed to fruit droppage after freezing weather. The Texas grapefruit crop was forecast to be 7 percent above last season.

Florida's Tangelo crop was forecast down 11 percent from the 1975/6 season, but tangerines is forecast at 2.6 percent higher than the 1975 crop because the Florida Freeze came after the major fresh harvest season for tangerines.

The production of Temples in Florida is now expected to total 3.5 million boxes as compared to 5.5 million box crop of last season. By March 1, 80 percent of the harvest was complete. In total, the citrus freeze was very real, but the results were not devastating.



\*Projection Prices by Bureau of Labor Statistics for National 1977 average.

## WHY ARE SPECIALTY SUGAR PRICES HIGH? \*

Many people have been surprised that while white sugar has been available in local supermarkets for around 20 cents a pound, specialty sugars (brown, confectioners, and cubed sugars) were available only at sharply higher prices, around 35 to 50 cents per pound.

Several factors account for the difference:

- Supermarkets frequently use white sugar to promote store sales, especially in recent months.
- White sugar is available in larger package sizes, while specialty sugars are usually limited to only 1 or 2 pound boxes at retail.
- Brown sugar may be modified to make it more pourable, which entails additional processing costs.
- Specialty sugars are not a volume item, and account for 5 percent or less of total consumer package sales of sugar.
- Specialty sugar prices frequently lag white sugar price movements by 2 to 6 months or more, because of their slower turnover.

\* From: USDA/Sugar and Sweetener Report 2/77.

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